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# *The* AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

FEBRUARY, 1944

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## MOSTLY PERSONAL

By JOHN T. BARTLETT, Co-Publisher



John T. Bartlett

If you take literary teas quite seriously, if authors' contact men have seemed to you wholly sincere, intellectual fellows, if you have caught yourself on occasion practicing a literary line, perhaps your ears will burn a little as you read passages in John P. Marquand's "So Little Time." This is the story of the life and career of a play doctor. Jeffrey Wilson was too analytical to write good plays himself, but he had a genius for turning the wobbly productions of others into box office: that became his profession.

The story provides Mr. Marquand with a perfect opportunity to satirize some of the silly, fantastic institutions and figures of the New York literary scene. Publishers, writers, critics and other habitual patrons of literary teas, will continue to attend these alcoholic and often weird affairs, but perhaps some of them, having read Marquand, will be more honest with themselves in doing so.

Sinclair Merriwell, authors' contact man, introduced by Marquand, will no longer be to us a literary ambassador, but just another variety of high-pressure salesman, full of words and tricks. Sinclair ought to find the going a little bit harder at the 1944 writers' conferences.

"So Little Time," published by Little, Brown, is now past 600,000. I wish to thank Anne Ford for so promptly sending the photograph on our cover in response to my wire. M. A. B. found this book on the family Christmas tree, and later we jointly decided to publish Mr. Marquand's photograph.

Captain Meyer Friedenson, Army Medical Corps, was a practicing New York physician in pre-war days, and before the *Amazing Stories* Hitler Illustration contest (October A. & J.) had written exclusively for medical journals. The Hitler sketch aroused Captain Friedenson's imagination, and he did a story, "The Superman," which won first prize. Since he was a member of the Armed Services, the \$1000 war bond prize became \$2000. On his fiction debut, the doctor earned about \$2 per word.

It ought to be news when book publishers learn from the brewing industry what constitutes a fair set of rules for a literary contest. Pabst Beer has announced the Pabst Postwar Employment Awards (\$50,000 in maturity-value war bonds.) The 17 prizes (first, \$25,000 in bonds) are for the best plans, described in 2000 words or less, for providing employment after the war. The rules earn our high commendation.

There is no escape clause; writers can enter this contest and be sure the prizes will be awarded. The judges are disinterested—(Clarence Dykstra, president, University of Wisconsin; Wesley C. Mitchell, professor of Economics, Columbia University; Beardsley Ruml, chairman, Federal Reserve Bank of New York; and A. F. Whitney, president, Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen). Administration of the competition throughout will be impartial, handled by a committee directed by George C. Denny, Jr., moderator, America's Town Meeting of The Air. In final judging, entries will be identified by numbers only.

The announcement states, "Awards are to be made solely on the basis of the value of the plans sub-

mitted . . . not on literary merit." With equal frankness, book publishers looking for best-sellers, rather than enduring literature, would admit the fact.

Entries should be sent to the Pabst Postwar Employment Awards, 551 Fifth Ave., New York 17, N. Y., and must be postmarked not later than February 7, 1944. Announcement of winners will be made on April 12, 1944, "or as soon thereafter as judging can be completed."

And speaking of book contests: Bennett Cerf reports in *Saturday Review of Literature* that publishers are making their biggest profits in history. Which seems to eliminate the last of the defenses (financial necessity) for book contests with trick rules.

"I omitted a number of my experiences," William W. Pratt wrote when sending in his "Experience In Verse," "including the fact that I once studied cartooning. Here in New York I took it up again some years ago, but discovered it was not a job for a spare-timer. *The New Yorker* bought several of my ideas but rejected the drawings. I am enclosing a gag cartoon just for the fun of it, and am submitting it gratis provided you can use it to break up my article. (Nothing like flaunting my versatility!) Now let's include one of my verses, and I'll have supplied the whole issue except for a few market tips. . . .

"If the photo startles you, please remember that I am in my middle forties. Was in the army during the last war. As a bachelor. I can hear readers saying, 'Well, it's about time that guy sold a few jingles!', but I don't mind for now I'm old enough to appreciate success if it comes. If it doesn't come, I've still had fun trying."

The *Saturday Evening Post* often publishes Mr. Pratt's verses, but we were ahead of "Post Scripts" in appreciating his talents, and we hope to go right on publishing his bright lines. By way of encouragement, we have raised our rate to him; and we insisted on making payment for his cartoon, which we liked—you will like it, too.

Sweetness and light really do surround—sometimes—author-agent relations, but the happy writers were not moved to join in our letter contest, "The Writer And His Agent." Unfriendly, skeptical, and bitter writers were numerous among the contestants. We regret that the symposium on pages 13 and 14 is not more representative.

## THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

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FEBRUARY, 1944

No. 2

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Own work sold to nearly 100 publications from top slicks through pulps and book firms. Clients have made the Post, Esquire, book publishers.

The high percentage of literary material which, in the big-pay fields, is sold through agents, proves the soundness of the system. For the individual writer, however, the answer is always in himself, the kind of literary work he does and its quality and volume—and, perhaps, in available agents and their interests. Writer and agent are two specialists who make a team; if they can't work together successfully, they should break up. . . . *The Author & Journalist* will return to this subject in a later issue.

▲ ▲

We welcome home, and to a place on our active subscription list, Alice Margaret Huggins, of Topeka, Kansas. Miss Huggins arrived on the exchange ship Gripsholm last month, and one of the first things she did was to ask us to resume her subscription ("my favorite magazine," she calls A. & J.) Before Pearl Harbor, she received the magazine at the American Board Mission, Tungshien, Peking, China. . . . Our suspense file of pre-war Asiatic subscriptions grows smaller, but not nearly as rapidly as we wish it would. . . . Clyde Cook writes he found copies of A. & J., tattered from much reading, in barracks in the Aleutians. . . . And a Hawaiian subscriber observed a bomber pilot beside his plane reading A. & J. in a moment of relaxation.

▲ ▲

"First Things First," by Clee Woods (January A. & J.), was discussed for two hours by a writing class at a midwestern university. . . . Postmaster-General Walker's amazing decision in the *Esquire* case should lead to a showdown; with high court determination, A. & J. predicts an ending, favorable to publishers and writers, of the entire second-class controversy. . . . Our March issue will be the Annual Forecast Number. . . . We have some unusual articles arranged for early issues; we don't believe A. & J. in 28 years has published anything better.

□ □ □

### Thumb-Tacked

I have just finished reading . . . and re-reading . . . Mr. Wright's "All You Need To Know" in the December *Author & Journalist*. I want Mr. Wright to know here's one would-be writer who thinks it's GRAND! Each point he mentioned is now thumb-tacked to the wall above my typewriter . . . to be used as a yardstick in future.

EVE HAMILTON TAYLOR.

10 Homewood Ave.,  
Napa, Calif.

### Liked "Salvage"

A. & J.:

Allan K. Echols' two part article, "Salvage," is one of the most instructive pieces I have read in any of the journals in many a year.

DAMAN C. FENWICK.

P. O. Drawer 990,  
Zanesville, Ohio.

### Above and Beyond

A. & J.:

Thank you! *The Author & Journalist* has always been good, but this December issue is more than anyone could expect. Doris Knight, Allan K. Echols, and Sewell Peaslee Wright really let their locks down. It has taken me 20 years to learn what they reveal in an hour's reading. I'm grateful to them, and to you. . . .

E. C. O'CONNOR.

3202 23rd St.,  
San Francisco, Calif.

### First Sale

A. & J.:

Imagine my amazement when my first manuscript sent out to a magazine chosen from your market list was accepted. It paid for the year's subscription many times over.

ISABEL M. WOOD.

Nela Crest Rd.,  
East Cleveland, Ohio.



# THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST

February, 1944

## ENDINGS ARE EASY

. . . By SEWELL PEASLEE WRIGHT

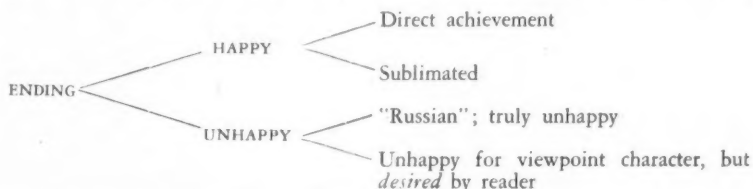
ABOUT the oldest, and certainly the least helpful rule I know regarding story-writing is that a story consists of three parts: an opening, a middle section, and an ending.

You probably know a lot about openings, because there has been so much written on this subject, and the middle section is obviously that part of the story which keeps the opening and the ending apart, but you may not have given enough consideration to endings, so I'd like to talk them over with you.

I believe I can demonstrate that, while openings are complex, and susceptible to an infinite number of variations, a story always ends in one of only four ways. Moreover, I think I can show you that by playing around with these four possible endings, you can learn a lot about plotting in general, and give many a yarn a twist that will sell what otherwise might be a dud.

So much for my premises; now let's get down to work!

I'll not attempt to keep you in suspense about the four possible endings. The chart which appears here presents these four possibilities so graphically that you can take them in at a glance—and I'd suggest that you make an enlarged copy of this chart and hang it over your desk, as a little reminder that you really don't have to use the No. 1 ending always!



The chart will give you the general idea, but to bring out its full usefulness, we should have some explanations and examples.

The Direct Achievement ending is the so-called "happy ending" you've heard about all your life. Jack is in love with Jill. Jack has difficulties, but he does marry Jill. That's the love-story version of the No. 1 ending. In an adventure story, Jack starts out to do some particular job; to find a lost person, to clear his name, to rescue the gal, to learn a vital fact, to avenge himself or whatever. In the crime story, the detective puts the finger on the guy what done it. No matter what type of story you write, if a lead character with whom the reader

is in sympathy achieves the thing he set out to achieve at the beginning of the story you have the most commonplace of all endings: Direct Achievement.

The second type of ending isn't quite so simple to explain. Let's start by a definition of the word "Sublimated." My battered dictionary says it means "*To free from dross; refine, purify.*" That's good enough for me.

In the Sublimated ending, Jack starts out madly in love with Jill; is hell-bent on winning her for his very own. Somewhere along the way Jack finds that while Jill may be dripping glamour, she isn't the gal for him at all, so he winds up in a clinch with Cinderella. Or maybe he starts out to find that lost person, but en route learns how embarrassing or disastrous it would be should he carry out that mission; he reports failure, knowing that this is the better thing. He rides to rescue the gal, and perhaps does so, but learns that she really loves the sheik and returns her to her kidnapper. He learns the vital fact, but unselfishly does not reveal it, because it would bring disaster to too many; or refuses to extract the vital information because it would mean unhappiness or dishonor to the person from whom the information must come. Or . . . and this is the best example of the lot! . . . he seeks to avenge

himself, and then, with revenge in his grasp, gives it up.

I say this last is the best example of the No. 2 ending because this ending is ideal for a story in which the lead character sets out all unwittingly to do an unworthy or at least the second-best thing. Note that, at the beginning of the story, the lead character is thoroughly sold on the motivation he has. He believes it is right and utterly desirable. The reader may agree with him at this point, and swing over to another belief later on, when more facts are presented; the story should develop in such fashion that the reader (having less prejudice) swings over more quickly than does the lead character.

The psychology of this is good, and results in

lots of the most nerve-shattering type of suspense, if properly handled. The reader likes the lead character; wants him to be happy about the whole thing. But the reader sees that the lead character, with the very best of intentions, is about to make a terrible mistake. The reaction in the reader is of that type which you have observed in creepy motion pictures when the panel opens over the head of the sleeping blonde and a hairy hand clutching a dagger slowly emerges . . . and the youngsters (and sometimes the oldsters) in the audience cry out "Wake up! . . . Oh, wake up!" A danger perceived by the reader but not by a lead character with whom the reader is in sympathy really puts the reader on the edge of his chair . . . and the danger does not have to be physical. To use a less dramatic example than the one immediately above; have you ever stood behind a checker or a chess player and had to bite your tongue to keep from warning him of the danger in a move he was about to make? Or had to stifle a cry of anguish when kabitzing a bridge game? If so, you will appreciate how very effective this type of ending can be, because you'll remember how delighted you were when the chess player decided on the smart move instead of the bad one; when the bridge player put back the card he was about to play, and slapped down the one and only right one.

We've talked at length about the No. 2 ending, but we will spend but little time on No. 3, the "Russian" ending. This is the bitter, truly unhappy ending; stark tragedy. Romeo and Juliet is a dandy example. The designation I have used is the common one; the Russians wrote so many stories of bleak tragedy, unending and unrelieved, that "Russian ending" has become synonymous with "unhappy ending." (We won't go into Herr Hitler's ideas on the subject!)

Unless this is the first copy of A. & J. you've ever read, which would mean you're indeed a tyro, I don't have to tell you that a story with a Russian ending is not likely to sell to any popular magazine.

We come now to the fourth and final ending, which is a particularly interesting one if you like the short short form. I'll explain why presently.

This type of ending is a cross between No. 1 and No. 2, with overtones of No. 3. It's similar to both No. 1 and No. 2, because the reader is pleased with the outcome. It's like No. 2, and *unlike* No. 1, because the lead character doesn't do what he set out to do. The similarity to No. 3 comes from the fact that the story ends in stark defeat for the lead character. Which makes it sound very involved and complicated, doesn't it?

Well, here's what really happens when you come forth with a No. 4 ending: you have simply elected to use the *antagonist*, the "heavy," the villain of the piece, as the lead or viewpoint character. He strives to do an unworthy thing; the reader is not in sympathy with his project and wants to see him get it in the neck. He does, so the reader is happy about the whole thing. BUT, since the story ends in the utter defeat of the viewpoint character, it is, *from his point of view*, an "unhappy" ending, no matter how much the reader may cheer.

Call it a technicality if you want to; it's still something worth knowing, and worth playing around with when the plotting of a story stumps you.

Look: you're doing a crime story. The detective or his stooge is the usual viewpoint character, but if you use either of them, you're hooked with a long, tedious explanation as to how the crime was committed, and so on . . . and, wisely, you don't like that.

So you say to yourself, "Why not tell it from the viewpoint of the guilty person? He conceives and

executes the 'perfect' crime. We know why and how he did it; we do not see any possible loophole. We see the detective sniff and sniff, and never catch the scent, apparently. And then comes the moment when the detective puts the finger on the guilty one and—Bingo! All that need be explained is the one little slip that the viewpoint (guilty) character made." And you find, upon further consideration, that now you're cooking with gas.

It's exactly the same story, save for viewpoint. Do it from the detective's viewpoint, and it emerges with a No. 1 ending: the detective does the thing he set out to do. Write the identical story from the viewpoint of the guilty person, and you emerge with a No. 4 ending: the criminal's desire to commit the crime and escape punishment is completely defeated; for him it is a Russian ending; for the reader, a happy ending. So we make a special classification for it, and a very useful and profitable classification it is!

Just about now would be a good time to take another look at the chart. Look at it, and *study* it. Notice that the first forking or bifurcation . . . if you *must* have a ten-dollar word for it! . . . indicates the two major possibilities: the technically happy and the technically unhappy endings. Each of these forks in turn into two other possibilities; that is, there are two "happy" and two "unhappy" endings. Memorize these four in the order given:

1. Happy; he gets what he goes after.
2. Sublimated; he gets something better.
3. Russian; truly unhappy for all concerned.
4. Unhappy for lead character; not for reader.

The idea is definitely *not* to simply expand your technical knowledge of the craft, nor to add another formula to the several you probably know already. The idea is to place in your hands a tool which will help you produce more salable fiction. It's a tool which will be particularly useful to writers who find it easy to start a story, but difficult to finish it, and to those who find their work dropping into a too-familiar pattern.



"We like your story, Smith. Cut it down to one-half page and we'll try to squeeze it in."

People who have the first-mentioned problem will find this list invaluable if they will simply take themselves in hand and reason things out something like this:

"OK, chump; you've started a story. The motivation is good; it's strong, and it's interesting. The obstacle is about enough to block it for almost all the required wordage, and it stands square in front of the motivation, as a good obstacle should. The resulting situation should be intriguing to the average reader.

"Well, according to the little chart up there on the wall, the story can end in one of only four ways . . . and since you aren't silly enough to use a Russian ending, you can narrow that down to three. What do you mean you've started a story and can't figure out an ending, then? If a No. 1 ending is trite, maybe the introduction of another character will make it possible to use a No. 2 ending . . . and if you don't like that, you might be able to switch the viewpoint and come up with a No. 4 ending. Let's see, now . . ."

Then, chum, having decided upon the ending you're to use, it should not be difficult to fill in the rest. You have a start of the story: the principal characters, the general background, and the problem. You also know how the story ends. With those two points fixed, you should be able to draw the line between, just as it would be a simple matter for you to pick the best route between your town and another town nearby.

I think that one of the reasons why so many beginners find it easy to start a story, and hard to finish it, is simply that they don't fix upon the ending; extending the figure of speech just used, let's say they're in the mood for a trip, they get the car ready and load it up with the family and the luggage . . . and then find themselves at a loss because they haven't decided upon an objective. As soon as a destination is fixed, the driver slips the car into gear and off he goes; he may have plenty of trouble along the way, but he knows where he's going and keeps plugging along until he gets there.

For the writer who experiences no particular difficulty in completing his stories, once started, but who finds that a habit-pattern is robbing his work of life and variety, the use of this chart should be invaluable.

Chances are that he has used No. 1 endings exclusively . . . although I have known writers who were just as wedded to No. 2 and No. 4 endings. (Only veritable tyros may be expected to consistently embrace the Russian!)

It will be found that a *deliberate* consideration of the other possibilities will work wonders; if, for example, you have been doing love stories, and have used No. 1 endings largely or exclusively, you may well be amazed and delighted to see what happens when you have Him or Her see the error of his (her) ways just in time, and marry the right one, after all. Or you may find charming vistas opening up when you do a story or two from the viewpoint of the rival, who has a clever scheme indeed to win Jack, the stout fellow, from the lovely, trusting Jill.

I promised you, several paragraphs ago, why the No. 4 ending should be of particular interest to those who write the short-short. While it is true that by no means all short-shorts conform to this rule, it is true that an imposing percentage of short-shorts do utilize the No. 4 ending.

The reasons are fairly obvious. In any story where the obstacle is a person (the antagonist) the story is, primarily, *his* story. His actions make it go. If he were not there, Jack would marry Jill and be done with it; there would be no rustler to chase, no murderer, no dishonest partner, no enemy agent . . . no

story! Since the antagonist's actions *make* the story, the recording of those actions is the simplest and *shortest* means of relating the story. To end it, all the writer has to do is show the antagonist getting slapped down.

To do the story in the more conventional way, with a No. 1 ending, the writer has to record the doings of the protagonist and his associates, their conflicts with the antagonist, their reactions, the *slapping-down* scene, and then, if the story has any great amount of suspense, the character who saw through the antagonist's schemes, and circumvented them, has to tack on an explanation.

To put it more simply, in the average story, the antagonist plays a less involved role than does the protagonist. He simply sets the trap; the antagonist struggles in it. He lies in wait and pulls the trigger; the protagonist is wounded, painfully drags his way back to camp, suffers, is nursed back to health by the gal. The antagonist tells one clever little half-lie; Jack and Jill mill around and suffer for weeks.

In a majority of stories in which the obstacle element is a person or a group of persons, the story can be effectively told in fewer words by telling it from the antagonist's viewpoint, and by ending the story to the reader's satisfaction by utilizing a No. 4 ending . . . which makes the No. 4 ending the short-short story writer's very good friend indeed!

## THE AUTHOR'S TYPEWRITER

### Keeping It Fit for the Duration

By MARGERY MANSFIELD

1. Form this habit: when you stop writing (even for a little while) throw off the paper release lever and cover your machine. You keep out some dirt, and the rubber platen will not develop flat places from continuous pressure.

2. Before erasing, run the carriage to one side. Release a margin stop if necessary, so that you can brush the particles away from the machine instead of into it.

3. Every day, dust the outside of the typewriter, the desk beneath it, and the inside of the portable's carrying case. Preferably every day, remove dust and lint from the machine. Helpful tools: an old tooth-brush, the brush on your typewriter eraser, eyebrow tweezers. To clean under the type bars, lift them by pressing down all the keys simultaneously, with one hand. Brush under the type bars and put a sheet of paper under them (to catch dirt) then brush the type and slots in the type segment bar. Once a week remove spools and clean farther; clean the rubber platen if it needs it. (Use cloth moistened with carbon tetrachloride, obtainable at drug store.) This keeps the platen from getting shiny and hard.

4. Play gently—don't force any key or lever. Don't slam the carriage back fiercely at the end of the line. Don't jerk a sheet out; use the knobs. Use knobs (not spacer) to lower a new sheet to the first writing line. (The spacer will last longer.) If the machine is attached to a typewriter desk, don't slam it shut.

5. *Never* oil the slots in the type segment bar (the semi-circle just below the big cylinder.) By doing so I put a machine out of commission. Learn to oil from a service man, or have him do it twice a year.

# EXPERIENCE IN VERSE

. . . By WILLIAM W. PRATT



William W. Pratt

THE general opinion seems to be that verse writing should be left to the beginner—a stepping stone for the novice who wishes to break into print. In a sense this may be true, yet many a writer has built a reputation on verse alone. I am thinking of Dorothy Parker who light-versed it into the Hollywood studios, of Ogden Nash who is now collecting royalties from a Broadway hit, and of Margaret Fishback who graduated from rhyming into a

weekly page for *Liberty Magazine*.

A lot of minds, including the editorial ones, are doubtful about the dividing line between verse and poetry. Being confused along with the best of them I am satisfied to class light verse as "poetry with tongue in cheek." The principal difference as I see it is that verse is more understandable and usually brings in the cash, while highbrow poetry often isn't and doesn't.

What are the requirements of a verse writer? First, a developed sense of humor. He must have the ability to gag about his own as well as the other fellow's everyday habits and to express them in smooth, rhythmic and condensed wordage. And he must be able to accent (or scan) properly when putting his ideas on paper. In my estimation verse writing cannot be acquired by study—a person must have it in him.

Because of the small checks that come from the beginners' markets, the poet is usually looking for more lucrative openings in the writing field. I know this from experience, and I know I made a mistake. After a year of rhyming I am convinced that the established verse writer who will apply himself, should be able to live on the proceeds of verse alone. To quote Berton Braley, one of the top men in the field: "Every first-rate versifier I know who really works at the job, makes a moderate, and in some cases opulent, living at it."

In saying this Mr. Braley no doubt meant that the writer must take advantage of every available market. The verse market is wide and varied when you include advertising companies and greeting card publishers.

I was able to sell verse when in my early teens. This was back in the days of the silent movies when everyone was trying his hand at scenario writing. Joining that parade I managed to sell several one-reel comedies for the fabulous sums of \$35 each. Verse, as you may guess, was quickly cast aside.

Being a dabbler—a spare-time writer who always had a weekly salary to stave off starvation—I never stuck to any one creative line long enough to conquer it. There were periods when I would stop writing for months at a stretch, such as the long unproductive lapse when I first arrived in New York. But it was in my blood. When I fell in with a group of busy pulp writers the old flame was rekindled.

The pulp love story seemed to be my best bet, but my efforts came back marked "too sophisticated." I admitted to myself that I was laughing at the heroine

instead of weeping with her. Since I was too sophisticated perhaps I belonged in the quality publications such as *The Atlantic Monthly*. I selected a prominent instructor who told me I had the stuff, but he eventually got me so involved in fiction's technicalities and confusing formulae that I withdrew in a state of mental bedlam.

The detective field next interested me. I spent six months on a "thin man" type of novel; three hundred pages of murder and wisecracks. It made the rounds without finding an editor who shared my enthusiasm for it. Following this experience a playwright invited me to collaborate on a three-act comedy which I did and which required another six months of hard labor. Producers went so far as to phone me and compliment me on the script, but those who read it hadn't the cash necessary for production and those who had the cash were too busy to give it a reading. After many months of wandering, waiting, and hopeful revising, the script was turned over to a willing agent.

Before I had time to close my typewriter I was introduced to a musician who was on the hunt for a lyric writer. This looked like the most promising offer so far. This melody-maker had spent eight years as arranger for a name band. Besides being a competent musician he was acquainted with many of the leading band leaders, vocalists and song publishers in New York.

If you think this helped us, you have never tried the game. We worked together on many tunes, any of which we felt needed but a bit of plugging to put them over, but war conditions had practically closed the song market to newcomers. Orchestra leaders said they would play the tunes if we first got them published, and publishers said they would handle them if we first got name bands to put them on the air. The whole setup looked like a conspiracy. Finally the tunesmith was taken into the service of Uncle Sam and I was stranded on the wrong side of writer's cramp with nothing but an idle portable to keep me company.

Instead of quitting for a period as I had done in the past, I decided it was high time I found some small success for my efforts. Writing the lyrics had put me back in the verse groove. In spite of the bugaboo that verse doesn't pay, I resolved to make a go of it. I considered the Parkers, the Nashes, the Braleys and the McGinleys. If they found it worth their while, why shouldn't I?

Being prolific I managed (in my spare time) to write on an average of a verse a day—the verses being anywhere from four lines to fifty. My first sale was made to a New York newspaper, the editor of which soon began to accept them in lots of five and six. In a few months I surprised my writing friends by hitting a leading slick weekly and by having my name plastered right up there with the top-notchers.

Considering my output, rejections were piling up on me. I was selling about 33 1/3 percent of my production. This was a good average, but what was I to do with the two-thirds that began to clutter my desk? Many of these verses had merit; editors had told me so. Looking ahead to book publication I wrote to my friend Pete Smith who edits one of the best small town dailies in Pennsylvania, offering him the leftovers to run as a daily feature. His reply:



"Sure—shoot!" didn't seem to convey much enthusiasm, but that is how a very successful column was started. After a year of it Pete admits "Prattles" is the most-read feature he carries. He now cries into his press every time I mention dropping it. To anyone who wishes to write verse let me recommend this daily feature idea, whether or not there is money involved. Practice makes perfect is especially true in rhyming. A deadline looming ahead is one thing that will force you to produce.

Light verse, like fiction, must have a plot. It must open in a way that will attract the reader and it should develop smoothly and without padding. Lines of eight to ten syllables are the most popular. If you are doubtful about the meter or the accent, pretend that the preceding lines have been set to music and write the remainder to the same tune. And above all else do not be careless with titles.

I do not know how other verse writers work for I have never met one, either good or bad. My method is entirely my own: I will give it to you for what it is worth.

When I get an idea I let my mind play with it for awhile—sometimes for days—and occasionally I jot down a line or two regardless of rhyme. When I am satisfied that I know exactly how it should be presented, I originate the two or four lines that will form its conclusion. Every light verse should have a smash ending; a surprise ending when possible. If it is to be a lengthy effort, such as is so frequently seen in "Post Scripts" (but difficult to sell elsewhere) I write all appropriate expressions that come to mind and then go on the search for words that rhyme. Sometimes a better finish will unearth itself. If the original one seems too good to waste, I try to insert it somewhere else. The verse form constructs itself as I go along.

Now that my name is appearing quite regularly I am often confronted with the old question so familiar to writers: "Where do you get the ideas." Or as an elderly lady put it: "How do you think them up?" My answer is that it becomes a habit.

The best ideas are gleaned from the normal—and sometimes the abnormal—occurrences of everyday life. An odd sign in a shop window. A morsel of conversation at a dinner table. A bright quip of a newspaper columnist or a radio commentator. Anything that strikes your fancy can somehow be formed into verse.

### LAY THAT PISTOL DOWN

When plotting a thriller  
Don't stop in the tussle  
To envy your killer  
His nerve and his muscle.

Your days may be duller,  
Your nights less exciting,  
But though they lack color,  
Go on with your writing.

A story dispenser  
Must labor to spin one,  
But life *by* the pen, sir,  
Is better than *in* one.

—William W. Pratt.

### RECIPE FOR VERSE

Your little idea,  
Like pudding or jello,  
Belongs in the pantry  
Until it is mellow.

The start and the ending  
Need meaty connections,  
And smoothness in rhyming  
Will cut your rejections.

If wisely concocted  
And properly treated,  
An Ed, though dyspeptic,  
Will avidly eat it.

—William W. Pratt.

As proof that ideas are everywhere, consider this jingle of mine recently published in the *New York Journal-American*.

### DRY HUMOR

Like Adam with the apple core  
That doomed his garden fling,  
I'm only tempted more and more  
When warned against a thing.

A stringent order makes me growl,  
And being so like you,  
I grab an extra paper towel  
When told that *one* should do.

I recall leafing through an old copy of *Author & Journalist*, issue of October, 1942, and rereading Clement Wood's article "Are You a Father Goose?" In it he quoted A. A. Milne:

The King asked the Queen, and  
The Queen asked the dairymaid, etc.

This struck me as being very appropriate at the time, considering the lamentable butter shortage, so I wrote a twenty-four line verse by revising it in this manner:

The King asked the Queen, and  
The Queen asked the groceryman:  
"How's about some butter for  
The flapjacks of the crown. . . ."

It was submitted to the *New York Post* and published the following day.

Although humorous verse sells more readily, I do not think it wise to confine yourself to the satirical or frothy species provided you have a sentimental streak as well. What is more appealing than a serious poem with a light or whimsical touch? One of my most successful serious efforts was inspired by an article in a newspaper. It concerned three little brothers who were in need of a foster home for the war's duration. The writer, a woman, listed a few of the things a boy should have to make his childhood a normal one. I added to this list and the result was a thirty-line verse that appeared in the Christmas number of the *Saturday Evening Post*. It has brought more favorable comment than any other thing I have written.

One lesson I have learned is to honor the editorial taboos. Keep away from all controversial topics, such as politics; the editor may be wary of stepping on the subscribers' toes. Never offer anything that kids the publications' advertisers. Pass up any bright

quip about the armed forces during wartime. A large percentage of light verse is written in the first person, so if you must kid someone, why not let it be yourself?

Keep away from timely subjects—verse that will be wasted unless used in a period of days or weeks. If you must write them keep them short and submit them to your local newspapers. Magazines, even those issued weekly, plan their pages months in advance.

In the more serious writing it seems to me that nature is done to death. I think other writers will agree with me that the two subjects most apt to win editorial approval are children and kittens. And try to remember that appealing humor will always win over mushy sentiment. Write it in a way that will encourage the reader to say: "Now isn't that just like a kid?"

A writer, as you are well aware, should never take "no" for an answer. Write and write and write, and keep plugging the same markets week after week. If you are persistent and if you keep your material in front of them (provided, of course, that it is consistently good) the editors will finally answer to your knock. I sold a lengthy verse on its twenty-fifth trip, and to a publication that had previously rejected it.

## MILK THOSE PLOTS DRY!

. . . By ERNIE PHILLIPS

IF plotting comes a bit on the hard side for you, and if you're in the habit of using a plot only once, change your habits, Brother, before you throw up your job and start operating a full-time fiction factory. You're being frightfully extravagant, and before you've been in business six months, you're apt to bump head-on against this reckless habit.

For it's that first year full-time that is sure to convince you just how scarce plots can be on occasion. A generously nourished, well balanced and properly proportioned plot, I mean.

I used to spend long painful hours mapping out a plot. They seldom came easy. Those that did generally proved dismal flops and invited swift rejection, whereas those that were the result of sweat and profanity and a huge expenditure of nervous energy invariably not only rang the gong but brought along invitations for more material.

But to follow up that well-balanced plot with another! That came hard in the apprenticeship days, and then I began to milk those precious plots just as dry as you'd strip the bag of a good cow. I started twisting that plot inside out and upside down and gleaming from it a series of loose-ends which eventually could be embroidered into another perfectly good plot as well as a perfectly good story.

After that, one plot often proved sufficient for from three to six or even eight stories which were accepted, paid for and published—and, as often as not, two or three of them would be purchased by the same editor who purchased the story resulting from the original or parent plot!

Sure, already I hear it! "Why, that's auto-plagiarism!" somebody is bound to exclaim with stout indignation. Hardly. Let me explain:

This one was a railroad story. I had been reading *West* steadily after its birth and checking over the first half-dozen copies or so, noticed Dorothy McIlwraith had not as yet published a railroad yarn. I figured a hard-boiled story of the twin ribbons of

In this first year entirely devoted to verse I wrote between three hundred and fifty and four hundred verses. Over a third brought checks—ninety percent of the balance have been published. In some cases a check for a single verse was as much as a pulp writer, in his first year, receives for a five thousand word story. Two have been reprinted in an anthology for which I am to receive royalties. One has been used by a nun to introduce a thesis on child education. One was discovered by a Pittsburgh musician who has set it to music on a fifty-fifty basis. A Massachusetts writer has asked permission to include one in her new book on vitamins and nutrition. And last, but far from least, the *Author & Journalist* requested this experience article. In summing it up I feel that the year was well spent.

Please don't get me wrong—I do not consider myself an authority on verse at this stage of the game. Though I think a living can be made in this field, I continue for the present to be a part-time writer. Why? Because I am conservative and because I am not yet established. The first year has given me a firm foothold on the lower rungs of the ladder. In this second year I hope to climb high enough to look into the loftiest editorial windows, and I hope you will be right there with me.

steel as they stretch across the desert country might ring the gong. I had a hard-boiled brakeman who made the hoboes dig up a silver dollar else he'd shoot 'em off his train any place in the desert and make them hike long, cruel miles to the next station or water-tank. This brakeman was even held in vile repute by fellow trainmen as well as enginemen. His only explanation was he needed those silver dollars to put his kid through college. Merciless killer that he was, nothing was left to the imagination in drawing his penny-snatching character and in relating the horror and agonies he caused the luckless bums who chanced to hit his train. Well, you've probably guessed the result by now. Came the day when the tough brakeman's kid graduated from college. His Dad was all smiles; the Kid was coming home. On his next run, the shack was going over his train, cleaning it up, forcing bums to either pass over a silver dollar or hit the grit. "Need this dough now to put th' Kid in business," gloated the heartless shack.

The smell of tobacco smoke took him to an empty box car. Fearlessly, he crept from cat-walk to the edge of the swaying car, timed his every movement perfectly, swung with monkey-like agility and flipped himself inside. Some of the bums paid; others didn't have the dollar. He batted them fiendishly across the head and body with his pick-handle, booted them out the side-door into the dark night. One young bum tried to argue, put up a squawk. It was inky-black and the faint jerky glows from the shack's dangling lantern didn't illuminate the face before him and partially concealed by the felt hat the young tramp wore.

The hard-boiled shack beat that young bum unmercifully, booted him off into space—and caught one last, desperate gasp from the night: "Dad!"

Time he stopped the train and raced back to the limp form beside the right-of-way embankment, the Kid had died.

Dorothy McIlwraith liked the story, wrote a nice piece about it, and spoke favorably of the ending which had the heart-broken brakeman using the silver dollars he had collected from the bums to buy and erect at the head of the grave the largest tombstone ever seen in that part of the desert.

Now ordinarily, I would have forgotten that plot and flung it aside. But there was drama and suspense and a generous chunk of life in the raw attached to such a background and plot. Later I took that plot, turned it inside out, tossed it around a few days, hung it up to dry and out popped another one.

This one was the story of a hard-boiled railroad detective whose chief delight was beating up the bums he'd catch riding the freights. No torture was passed up. He invented brutal means of dealing with the drifters. Even trainmen and enginemen hated his very guts. Harvey-house girls wouldn't even treat him decently. Citizens of the little desert town in which he built his own private cemetery protested. This only made the railroad dick all the more savage. Tales of his merciless beatings spread throughout the empire of hobodom. Bums would travel thousands of miles out of their way to miss his division.

Then a young punk came along, fearless, reckless, filled with fight and adventure. He was forewarned, cautioned and bluntly told he was taking his life in his hands if he ever hit a train on the bull's division. The punk grinned, waved such warnings carelessly aside. He met up with the hard-boiled dick, was mauled around, booted off the train. But he survived, and he came back—and when they found the hard-boiled bull, his body was floating around in the tender of a big freight locomotive and his head had been crashed in with a coupling pin.

This one was sent to *Short Stories* and again Dorothy McIlwraith accepted and wrote a nice little note and paid generously and so a plot that served for two stories to the same editor was once more hung up on the line to dry and bleach and change color so it could be used again.

Those two yarns impressed me with the value of the hard-boiled angle and also with the fact Miss McIlwraith apparently liked such an atmosphere for her select group of readers. Okay, how's about another hard-boiled yarn from the same plot?

This one was baseball. It concerned a young, quiet, promising rookie who hits camp and, when introduced to the old-timer he is fighting for the third base job, receives naught but ridicule and sarcasm from the old veteran. The old veteran hates kids—hates merest sight of them; will go to any extreme to chase them off the club, hound them back to the bushes. Everybody on the club sympathizes with the youngster and this only makes it all the harder for the rookie. The old vet storms and rages and uses everything in the book to break the kid's nerve.

Then comes the crucial series. World's Series gold hangs in the balance. The old vet is spiked, fights to stay in the game but is carried off the field. Even while being carried from the field of battle, he screams and shouts biting words at the kid. The kid saves the day with a glorious bit of fielding, smacks out a base hit to clinch the pennant and then the old vet melts and warms up to the kid and shakes his hand and says:

"An' if the owner'll sign me up as a coach after they release me as a player, why—why, damn it, Kid. I'll make you the greatest third sacker these big leagues ever heard of!"

The story had lots of atmosphere, the glamour of the diamond, all the trimmings imaginable. But characterization put it across. Yep, you're right! Dorothy McIlwraith took it for *Short Stories*.

But why drop a good plot when it's working so

well? Why not hang it up on the line to air out again and see what drips from its tattered and worn corners? It was hung up. Here's what dropped out:

Another hard-boiled version strongly connected with the original plot.

This also is a baseball yarn. It concerns a hard-boiled ball player whose chief aim in life is to bait the umpires. He rides them from morning till noon till night; he rides them all over the diamond and even when he's off the diamond. Fans love him, though. They go for his fighting spirit. This old warrior is never out! And the other player is always out!

Well, it was fun establishing the fiery character of this rollicking old buzzard. I'd met lots like him during my days on the diamond. Then I planted it that this old crab had a son somewhere—a son he hadn't heard of in long years. His wife had died giving birth to the kid. Ball players travel the nation back and forth; it's hard for a father to carry an infant son around. So the kid had been parked with relatives; the crab sent monthly checks to cover expenses and education.

Then came the day when new blood was being injected into the league's umpiring staff. In St Louis the old crab got his first look at one of the new umps. His team-mates knew what would follow. Why, this big punk of a Blind Tom had a lantern-jaw—just right to smack around with a leathery fist!

Well, you've guessed it by now. The new umps was the crab's son riding under an assumed name but none save the kid and the old crab knew it. The kid called decision after decision against his dad, other players beefed, barked, and snorted, but not the crab. Fans were bewildered; fellow players unable to figure it out. In the deciding game of the flag race, the kid called a tight one against his old man that cost his father's club the pennant and World's Series money. Players rushed with blood in their eyes and murder in their hearts at the young



"Gosh A'mighty, it's developin' into a Love Yarn!"

umps. The old crab snatched up a bat, stood before the umps, began mauling his own team-mates back. "He's right! I was out! My—my kid called it right, an' th' first guy what lays a hand on 'im gets his skull split wide open with this 56-ounce club!" snarled the old crab. Arm-in-arm, father and son stroll off the field of battle while 65,000 wide-eyed fans stare in sheer astonishment.

Well, where to send this one? Sure! Dorothy McIlwraith. She didn't fail. It was published in *Short Stories*.

Through with that original plot? Why, it hasn't even started to work yet!

The following Spring it was baseball season again. The Winter before I did a diamond yarn wherein another youngster comes in to fight the old veteran for his job. This time a new twist was needed but the old original plot was equal to the occasion. It suggested that the father-son angle be brushed in another direction. The son-in-law angle. Easy. The old vet has a daughter just finishing school. She pops up to join the old man for a road trip as a graduation present. The old vet introduces her to everybody on the club except the rookie. "Aw, he's jus 'a punk, Beth—won't be with us thirty minutes!" snorts the old vet when Bethel asks who the youngster is.

Well, other players take Beth out of the hotel nights, then turn her over to the rookie.

In the end, the kid wins the old man's job and the old man's daughter as well and it isn't till then the old vet learns his daughter and the kid had been pals back at college.

Yep, right again. Dorothy McIlwraith took it for *Short Stories*.

Throw that plot away now? Not on your life! There followed auto racing stories, more Westerns, straight adventure yarns, more railroad stories, a couple of sea stories, even a love story, believe it or not! Then there followed, at various periods over the next ten years, still more stories dripping from the first basic plot. Many of them like those illustrated above went to identical editors and were published in the same magazine. Many of them were published in foreign countries and a good many of them were listed in the back-end of the old O. Henry Memorial Selections of the year.

There are more to be written; lots more; far more than I'll ever be able to write.

Why, milked and stripped and petted and nursed gently along, one good, well-balanced plot properly readjusted and given a new twist or two here and there can be used for an entire life-time and still not be milked entirely dry!

But a word of caution: Don't just rewrite the same old yarn. Use the basic plot germ, sure. But lift its face, give it a manicure, hang a new suit of clothes on the old superstructure, switch the background, use new atmosphere, replace the characters, but try to retain the chief bits of characterization that put the original across. That's not auto-plagiarism. It's good common sense, and a bit profitable as well. And the fact that one editor will buy the output of that original plot through the years should indicate the value of running the good plots through the wringer time and again. Good plots don't come easy, as a rule; but when you snag a good one, don't drop it until you've strained every ounce of wordage from it.

That's the way to make full-time writing profitable.

## LETTERS

### Curiosity and Suspense

A. & J.:

Tain't so. Curiosity ain't suspense. Not in my lexicon, or that of any writer's whom I know. S. P. W. was in a hurry when he wrote that screed in the December A. & J. Curiosity involves no more than a cause-to-effect or effect-to-cause questioning; S. P. W.'s article is filled with curiosity-arousers; but there isn't a single suspense-arouser in it.

Curiosity is an intellectual state; suspense an emotional one. For there to be suspense, there must be an emotional factor involved: Hope and Fear plus Anxiety. You see a man running across a railroad trestle. You may be curious as to who he is; what he is doing there; or why he is running. If there is a train coming and it is a race between it and the man to reach the end of the trestle, you've got suspense. You hope he reaches safety, you fear that he will not—or the reverse of that if he is a guy whom you want to see run over.

All of which, most certainly, S. P. W. knows better than I do. And the article isn't mislabeled: it is a unique Short Short Course in the Short Story.

JOHN PAUL JONES.

Los Angeles, Calif.

### Finest Thing

A. & J.:

"All You Need To Know" absolutely is the finest thing ever written on short-story writing. . . .

MRS. BESSIE MEHARD.

84 Indianola Rd.,  
Youngstown, Ohio

### Echols' Fan

A. & J.:

Thanks for "Salvage" by Allan K. Echols. Give us more by him. I like his style and direct approach to subject. . . .

Orange, N. J.

G. H.

### Unconscious Humor

A. & J.:

Far be it from me to tell Thomas Thursday, author of "Humor Is Supposed To Be Funny," in your October issue, how to sell manuscripts, for according to your footnote he has been doing this for some years, while I specialize in rejection slips. But his article was not only a prize example of unconscious humor, but it supplied a good illustration of the sort of thing some of us are up against when we try to break into the game.

Mr. Thursday outlines the plot of a boxing story which he completed and sold to a well-known publication. In this story, he had his hero rise to fame through the spraying of opponents' gloves with a vile-smelling liquid which killed the smell of leather, to which the hero was allergic. In due course of time, the hero was matched against the Champ, and his manager doctored the Champ's gloves.

Let's stop right here! Mr. Thursday may know his smells, but he doesn't know his bouts—and it looks as if Editor Bob Lowndes didn't, either!

In championship bouts, new gloves are brought into the ring, direct from the store where they are purchased, in the original shipping boxes. They are opened in the ring, in front of several thousand people and under the alert eyes of referee, seconds, managers, announcer, and fighters. Anyone who could doctor them under these conditions would be a sleight-of-hand artist indeed!

It was not necessary for the Champ's manager to "sneak into the dressing-room and empty out the bottle of stinkaroo." No, indeed! All he had to do, having discovered he trick, was to sit tight and let the rules take their course. Friend mauler's manager never would have gotten a chance at those championship gloves, stinkaroo or no.

It is just such boners as this one that make some of us wonder why sports story writers and editors don't get a copy of the State Rules and Regulations, and do a bit of research. If it's just too much bother, how about asking questions of some professional? Some of us wonder how much chance an authentic sports writer has with editors who encourage this sort of slipshod writing. . . .

PAGE HUNTOON.

Editor,  
Paperweight,  
Chula Vista, Calif.



## THE WRITER AND HIS AGENT

Prize Contest Letters by A. & J. Readers

### THE SUBJECT

Every AUTHOR & JOURNALIST mail contains letters about literary agents. To give our readers a chance to express themselves in print, we announced this contest in the December issue, offering \$10 for the best letter on, "The Writer And His Agent."

The winning letter appears under a pen-name, as do all others with the exception of that by Mr. Dunkin. THE AUTHOR & JOURNALIST regards the symposium as incomplete, and will give the subject authoritative attention in later issues.

### IT ALL DEPENDS

By Alfred Leonard Immi,  
Calif.

FROM many years as a professional writer, and experience with many agents, I have come to the conclusion that an agent is highly desirable, even necessary, for a writer who:

1. Lives at a considerable distance from the main literary market-place, which is New York.
2. Has little or no personal acquaintance with editors or publishers.
3. Is a consistent and prolific producer of material in a popular and lucrative field.

An agent is useless or even harmful to a writer who:

1. Lives in or near New York, or can visit that city frequently.
2. Has a wide personal acquaintance in the book and magazine world.
3. Produces slowly or writes in a specialized field where the market is limited and the monetary returns are low.

An agent can save a western writer, for example, months of time otherwise consumed in shipping manuscripts back and forth across the continent. But what good is that, if the manuscript goes to a routine list with no reference to its specific nature? I have had an agent return an unsold manuscript to me with a list of the magazines to which he had submitted it, and I have gasped at the fantastically inappropriate entries.

Over and over again I have sold manuscripts which an agent had given up as hopeless. True, usually (though not always) I sold them at a lower rate than he could afford to accept; his commission would not have been enough to justify his labor.

Unless an agent is personally enthusiastic about your work he will not push it, and if he does not push it any sales he makes for you will be practically accidental, and very few. On the other hand, an agent with enthusiasm but no judgment will sell nothing for you, either. I have had an agent tell me that a story of mine had brought the tears to his eyes; but he never sold it. I did, to a magazine he had apparently never considered. For one thing, I have never yet had a New York agent who submitted manuscripts regularly to Philadelphia and Boston, where some of the biggest publishing opportunities are. Naturally, most of them must do so; probably most of the material in *The Saturday Evening Post* and *The Atlantic Monthly* is bought through agents. I am only giving my own experience, which cannot be unique.

I have always tried to play square with agents. But when one has tried for two years to sell material for me without marked success, I have felt justified in breaking off relations and looking elsewhere. Only once have I had an agent fire me: he had made some of my biggest sales for me, but I didn't produce in sufficient quantity for him; he wanted no slow or inactive accounts on his ledger.

For some time I have been trying out what I think is an unusual arrangement. I sell non-fiction direct, since I have a wide acquaintance in two or three specialized fields, and I employ an agent for fiction only. But even this is unsatisfactory, and I think before long I shall take my chances without an intermediary, even though I live where it takes ten days for a manuscript to reach New York and be bounced right back to me. (And many of my topics are timely, so that too much delay will kill them.)

Every writer dreams of the ideal agent—the chap who will be completely sold on his work, who will go around insisting that editors read this magnificent stuff and snap it up before a long line forms on the right, who will send him news of possible opportunities and suggest themes he can handle. I know there are such agents—the annals of the profession are full of them. I still hope to find one. I have

### TWO KINDS OF AGENTS

"WHY do agents charge reading fees?"

This is a question often asked by beginners, to whom the idea of having an agent sell their work appeals very much.

One answer is, "Some agents don't." There are 20 or more literary agents who do not operate on a reading-fee basis. But there is an explanation. These agents ordinarily won't read or consider the work of a beginning writer. They don't want it submitted to them. Their policy is to work only with writers who have demonstrated their ability to write salable material. These agents are the ones who, when an unknown writer breaks into the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Collier's* or other top magazines, clutter up his mail with offers to handle his manuscripts.

Another group of agents will handle beginners' manuscripts, on payment of a reading fee. Unless these agents are compensated, they cannot afford to consider the miscellaneous, hit-or-miss manuscripts sent them. For the beginner, it is fortunate that agents of this type exist, for their professional knowledge and skill are available to any writer, irrespective of his experience or success.

to hope, for the only alternative is to believe that I'm not good enough for such an agent to bother with!

It is easy to find an honest agent, a reliable plodder who will go through the motions without much caring whether you stay in his stable or not. The perfect agent is different, and so far as I am concerned, a mirage. Perhaps the perfect agent is like the perfect wife—there are some, and they're wonderful; but finding one is a matter of sheer accident and colossal luck.

## DISILLUSIONMENT

THE literary agents with whom I have dealt have left me cold. My last experience was the worst. He was a reputable, long-established agent who had put across some big names which I shall not mention here because he is still in business and getting pretty old. He had bombarded me with literature for years, and I had inquired around in writing circles in New York and been assured that his agency was one of the best. A friend and I had been collaborating on a novel which we believed had some good stuff, a historical novel dealing with some wild and woolly events in the effete East which had never been published in fact or fiction form. We spent most of two years doing the research at considerable cost in time and money, and sent our manuscript to the agent.

He did a thorough job of reading and criticism. We revised the manuscript as he suggested, and returned it. After several trials with publishers, he informed us he had found one who saw "possibilities" in the book, but did not consider it "publishable" without revision.

If we would agree to it, the agent and publisher would employ a clever rewrite man (a former editor) to make the manuscript "publishable." This writer's price was high, but the publisher would advance the money to him and we could repay the publisher from our future royalties, also contracting to give the rewrite man a percentage.

The publisher seemed enthusiastic about the book. Some years before, for another house, he had taken a little book down at the bottom of the list, and promoted it to a sensational countrywide success. Now he was in business for himself. We were hopeful he would do wonders with our book, too.

The rewrite man did a job on the manuscript—such a job that we had to take the manuscript away from him and restore in the story something like its original faithfulness to historical fact. In the shuffle, we had to leave out one chapter altogether. We believe that chapter might have made the book a seller. As it was, the book did get on the best-seller list for a certain section of the country; but the publisher did not follow this up with a single line of advertising. Every review praised the book. It is still being read after eight years.

The agent had us tied up with such contracts and amended contracts that we each received the sum of \$2.85 in royalties!

And he had made the mistake, unknown to us, of jumping the gun with the movie people, offering the story through another agency before the book was published. In proof form, it didn't attract. After publication, several reputable Hollywood agents offered to push the story and actually have it read by two big-time stars and recommended for production—but our hands were tied by two contracts, and we were obligated to deliver a percentage to the Deadwood Dick rewrite man if the book ever should go into a flurry or be bought for picture production.

Mind you, I had published six books before this, and over 350 magazine stories, articles, novelettes

and novels, of which exactly one (1) story was sold for me by an agent. I have tried half a dozen agents—and have sold my own stuff where they failed.—CLAIR LOMBARD, Mass.

## GET A SECRETARY!

THE beginning writer needs a good teacher, the more advanced writer a stenographer and skilled secretary, more than he needs an agent. With the aid of a stenographer a writer can increase his output of acceptable manuscripts without an exhausting addition of more work, time, and efforts. With the aid of a skilled secretary, he can do his own marketing and do it more satisfactorily for his own writing interests. With each and both of these personal aids, the writer can maintain a personal direct contact with the publications and editors who are using and needing his productions.

An agent tends to turn the writer into an isolationist in the writing field. This creates a definite danger for the ambitious person. With an agent, the agent and his business are tops and the individual writer plays second fiddle, but with a stenographer and skilled secretary the writer and his production are tops, which is as it should be for the best writing success.—LESLIE E. DUNKIN, South Bend, Ind.

## HELP FROM AGENTS

MY remarks will concern only the greatest (numerically) class of writers extant—that host of people who either think they can write and are waiting for the day they can begin, or who occasionally *do* get an item, article or story published. Those now able to make all of their living out of writing can decide for themselves whether it pays to give an agent a cut or not.

The conclusions here reached have come from personal experiences. To state them would be the best way to help you form your own conclusions.

The editor of a great farm monthly had tentatively agreed to pay me \$350 for a 3500-word article on a Wisconsin enterprise deserving national attention. As my first chance at the big money, I worked long and hard at it. I submitted the article. It came back with many suggested revisions. I revised—but dazedly. I was not sure I was following the pattern of the editor's thoughts. I re-submitted. With many eliminations, the article was accepted. I was paid \$200. Later events have convinced me that, had I submitted the article to a good agent on the revision, I could have given the editor *all* that he wanted—and have been rewarded with the full \$350—less the agent's 10%.

Let's look at the later events:

I am probably the only farmer in America who ever spent a week as an excursionist on the Great Lakes. It was like a fairy tale to me: Niagara Falls, Mackinac Island, Sioux St. Marie, Chicago—scenes of beauty and interest of which I had not dreamed, to say nothing of my fellow passengers who were an entirely different class of people from the rural folk with whom I constantly associated. I was sure that if I could write this experience from a farmer's viewpoint it would be so unique it would have to be published.

I called the thing "I Came Back From Another World," crammed it into 4000 words—and its travels in search of an accepting publisher far exceeded mine. When it had been declined by everyone worth considering, I put it away. Months later, looking over A. & J., I noted a critic who offered to pass on one story gratis. Always curious as to what was wrong with my boat-trip story, I sent it to him—my first

agent experience. In a two-page friendly letter, he explained that there was no paying market for such efforts, and advised me to put no more work on it. He reminded me that vacation experiences, however thrilling to the vacationer, were dull to the listener, and suggested subjects which my obvious experience justified me in attempting. I had wasted the time of a dozen publishers (and my own, too) without learning why I shouldn't write such themes.

I didn't continue writing farm themes as the first agent advised. I had enjoyed considerable success in this field, but felt hamstrung. They left out the human element. You told how to make more money out of the soil, cows or chickens—with little or no drama of the people who did these things. Straight agricultural themes interest only a limited class, but with the injection of characters, pathos, and comedy, they could reach all classes. Why not—in a very limited way—become the O. Henry of the Middle West?

## AN AGENT'S VIEWPOINT

By RANDOLPH JEWETT

THIS is not an entry in the A. & J. writer-agent contest. But I hope that the editors will permit me to say, as an anonymous agent, some of the things which ought to be said, for the good of writers. Perhaps the simplest approach is to take a certain writer, Dobson for the purposes of this discussion, who has notably happy relations with his agent. The agent is proud of Dobson, and Dobson is grateful, as he should be, to Cherrington (that name is fictitious, too).

Dobson has never been on a best-seller list, and never in what in the writing profession is called big money. His net runs from \$4000 to \$7500 a year. I mention this to disabuse some writers of the idea that to get full professional service from a literary agent a writer must be making the Book-Of-The-Month Club, or landing in Hollywood.

These are qualities of Dobson that count big with Cherrington, as they do with any literary agent—

*He produces a good volume of work, steadily, and delivers it when promised.* I have had writers, and so has every other agent, with whom the difficult task was not selling their stories, but *getting them to write*, and getting them to write rapidly, under pressure, when necessary.

Dobson does a certain amount of experimental writing, but he devotes his time largely to *stuff for which there is a known market*. Some writers make themselves nuisances with an agency because they are forever chasing off after literary rabbits.

Dobson recognizes that in judgment of the market Cherrington is an expert. Dobson places himself in his agent's hands and conscientiously follows the latter's instruction and counsel. There are many writers temperamentally unfitted to sell through an agent, because they won't acknowledge the latter's superior judgment and ability.

When a manuscript doesn't sell, Dobson *doesn't blame the agent*. He realizes that an agent is no superman; he can sell only that which has current appeal. Dobson realizes that a writer's work may be uneven in quality; that market shifts come suddenly.

*He is cheerful about revision.* If his agent asks him to do a story over, making this or that change, he complies.

*He doesn't get lazy.* Dobson doesn't show signs of petering out. He has occupational permanence,

On this basis, I tried a short-short. (The number of words used in perfecting it belied the classification). I took no chances on editors this time, but sent it to a well-known New York agent—paying \$1.50 for his opinion. 'Twas well worth it. I could have spent that much in postage without finding the ailment. He defined a short-short, showed me I had written only an interesting little narrative for which no market existed, named my possible markets (if I conformed to the rules) and encouraged me to try again. Those are the things a sincere writer wants to know—and seldom will an editor tell him.

The opinion of a carefully-selected agent saves much wasted effort, names the disease with which your brain-child is afflicted, and gives you a genuine idea whether it pays to go on—and what field to till. Cold editors—and charitable friends—won't give you this information.—JOHN O'BRIEN, Wis.

and that is something very precious in the literary trade.

Every agent of experience has seen not one but many writers peter out. During early success, they wrote with passionate interest. In research and other preparation, they were tireless, keen, enthusiastic. But after a time the great drive of the first years slowed down. There began to be greater interest in golf and parties, a disposition to do a writing job easily, too easily. In the next stage, they were blaming the agent for lost markets, and declining sales.

I have seen a great deal of "agent trouble" among once-successful writers, and known about much other which has occurred, and I am convinced that in a majority of cases the writer is at fault. He isn't delivering good, timely copy, and the agent can't deliver fat payments.

Dobson shows no signs of deterioration. His course seems upward.

*Dobson trusts the agent implicitly.* I wouldn't put this forward solely as a favor to the agent—though any decent agent will react warmly to confidence. I know from experience that the writer who attempts to produce stories while harboring suspicions and animosities hurts himself. I have known of writers who, tied to an agent with a contract, have gone on a no-delivery strike for one, two or even more years, until the contract ran out. They hurt themselves much more than they hurt the agent.

All that I have said about Dobson sums up to this: The way to get results with an agent is to *work with him*. Let a writer make his account a desirable one to have, and he will easily find an agent who will handle it, and handle it with energy, skill and imagination.

The writers who complain about their experiences with agents are usually men and women whose production an agent can't handle profitably. The standard 10% is an adequate percentage on large sales, but it won't cover selling costs on scattered, miscellaneous production which has to be peddled extensively for occasional checks which are mostly small. This condition furnishes a mighty incentive to the agent to build the new writer to professional volume and consistent sales, and the smart writer will cooperate unstintingly to arrive at that pleasant result.

# THE STUDENT WRITER

By WILLARD E. HAWKINS

## LX—ROMANCE VERSUS REALITY

EXAMPLES thus far analyzed tend to demonstrate that the chief distinction between pulp and non-pulp love fiction lies in the element of realism. The difference is starkly apparent when we contrast the plot outlines of love-pulp stories with crassly or disagreeably realistic narratives. The lack of a happy ending in the latter is alone sufficient to emphasize the distinction.

In novels of general popular appeal, the difference is less obvious, since the plots are not dissimilar. The happy ending is common to both pulps and slicks. We must look for evidences of realism in the development—in the way emotional incidents are handled—rather than in the plots.

The distinguishing high point, emotionally, of the love-pulp yarn, is the "awakening kiss"—an incident in which the heroine tastes, to the fullest extent within the author's descriptive power, the ecstasy of glamorous romance.

In any love story, whether glamorous or realistic, there will necessarily be found some incident corresponding to this in purpose. It is, so to speak, the incident which brings the man-woman relationship to a focus and decides that the two shall marry or live together, or become engaged, or be somehow closely associated for a time.

In most purely realistic stories, the incident takes on qualities far from the rosy, sentimental glamour or the ecstatic bliss of the pulp awakening kiss. Here, for example, is such an incident, involving two young Bavarians of the peasant class, from the biographical novel, *The Life of My Mother*, by Oskar Maria Graf:

They stopped for a moment to catch their breath, turned and gazed at the wavy surface of the lake.

"Tessa," said Max, quite composed, "I'd like to get married."

"You would?" she said in the same tone. "Well, whom do you propose to marry?"

Max cast a quick glance at her. Then when she looked at him innocently, he smiled and answered, "Well, nobody as yet. But a business man can't stay single all his life."

"Hm," replied Tessa mockingly. "You're good! You want to marry and you don't even know whom. That's a new one."

"Tessa," said Max, looking at her fixedly, "let me tell you something. My bakery is going fine. Whoever marries me won't be badly off. Such a thrifty, hard-working woman as you would certainly suit me fine. I'd like to marry you, Tessa."

There wasn't the least trace of shyness in these words, nor of any impetuous longing. They sounded sober and carefully considered. They didn't frighten Tessa. On the contrary, unabashed and with a hint of irony in her voice, she said, "Well, what do you think of that! So that is what you're walking along with me for. Well, what you have in mind is none of my business."

Max was silent but not dismayed. "But Tessa," he began again, "after all, when Genevieve and Peter marry everything's going to break up on the farm. You certainly don't want to sit home an old maid all your life."

That made her think. "Well, what can I do about it? You'll have to go and talk to my mother."

"Good-bye, Tessa. I'm certainly going to talk to your mother."

"Yes, do for all I care. It's all the same to me."

Another extreme of realism involves episodes in which, although the mating pair are brought to-

gether by strong sex attraction, the portrayal of their passion is definitely unglamorous. Seduction, clumsy and abortive and even abnormal sex episodes, form much of the material of the purely realistic school.

Examples can be selected almost at random demonstrating that popular fiction takes a middle course between the purely realistic and the purely glamorous. This does not mean that it combines realism with glamour (although such combinations are found), but rather that it borrows certain elements from each. The following chart indicates the fundamental characteristics of the two extreme schools and the elements most frequently borrowed from each by general popular fiction:

### DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

STARK REALISM	POPULAR FICTION	GLAMOROUS ROMANCE
(Found in biographies, ultra-realistic fiction and plays)	(Found in smooth-paper general and women's magazines, popular novels and plays)	(Found in the love pulps, light romantic novels and plays)
Unhappy, tragic, frustrated endings	Happy endings	
Unhappy, unpleasant, sordid, commonplace incidents	Happy, pleasant, thrilling incidents (other types employed for contrast only)	
Everyday characters	Glamorous characters	
Tendency toward unpleasant, dull, eccentric types	Tendency toward attractive, beautiful, noble, types	
Realistic, true-to-life treatment of incidents	Glamorous, illusory, treatment of incidents	
Restraint of narration	Use of Superlatives in narration, even to point of exaggeration	

This is to say that from the realistic school, general popular fiction derives its *treatment* of incidents, but from the romantic school it takes the type of incidents to be so treated. It deals with pleasant incidents (using unpleasant ones chiefly to secure suspense and contrast), but deals with them realistically.

There are, of course, modifications and gradations of all types. Much popular fiction, especially in the love field, is glamorized to a certain extent. And now and then in the popular magazines we come across stories in which unpleasant characters and incidents predominate. But the distinctions indicated clearly prevail.

Without going into the subject as thoroughly as might be desired, the generalizations may be offered that a greater tendency toward sentimental glamorizing of love incidents will be found in rural and family magazines and women's periodicals than in those of general circulation—more of it in motion picture dramas than in stage plays—more of it in the circulating library type of light romance than in books of general appeal.

A few incidents from stories of general appeal will



illustrate the method of pleasant realism typical of such fiction. The following example is from the novel *Landfall*, by Nevil Shute (the plot of which was summarized last month):

He pushed the starter . . . the worn engine turned feebly. "It won't go," he said, and there was a hint of laughter in his voice. "It's the rain or something."

She stirred beside him. "I can get a bus from the corner."

He said, "Don't go. There's a horse coming in a minute."

"What horse?"

"The horse that's coming to tow us home."

"I'll sit here till the next bus comes."

"All right. What's your name?"

(He learns that she formerly worked in a corset factory, only making bras.)

He said innocently, "What's the difference?"

"Why—a bras is what you . . ." She checked herself.

"You know well enough what it is. You're just being awful."

In the warm darkness underneath the rug his arm reached around her shoulders and his hand lay at her side. He moved his fingers. "Honestly, I don't know what it is. Is this one?"

"No, it's not. Give over, or I'll get out and walk home."

"I only wanted to find out."

"Well, look in the papers. There's pages of them in the advertising."

"I don't read the advertisements. I think they're low."

"Not half so low as what you're doing now. Give over, or I will get out and walk."

(When they arrive at her home:)

She said, "I had a lovely evening, ever such fun. Thank you ever so much for bringing me home."

"Is this where I kiss you?"

"No, it's not."

"You're wrong."

Presently she got out of the car and stood for a moment in the shadowy doorway, slim and erect, waving him good night.

We may note that this passage, while more frankly sexy than would be permitted in a pulp love-story, is at the same time much more restrained emotionally. The casual banter indicates that the young people are

enjoying themselves, but on the surface there is neither an emotional nor a sentimental reaction, even in the kiss. To the pulp heroine, the latter would bring a moment of swooning ecstasy.

A later episode of similar tendencies in the same story runs as follows:

(Again taking Mona home after her shift as barmaid at the canteen, Jerry explains his entering a certain store by saying he went to buy a lipstick.)

"You are the silliest thing ever. You don't use lipstick."

In the dark privacy of the little car, parked snugly underneath the trees, Chambers said softly, "The girl told me it was kissproof in the shop. Shall I strike a match and see?"

The girl nestled closer into his arms. "No. You do talk silly."

A thought struck the pilot. "What about yours?"

She rippled with laughter, against his heavy overcoat. "Mine comes off like anything . . . Let me clean your face."

"Better do that when I get you home. It might get dirty again."

This is realism—of a sort—as contrasted with the superlatives and glamorous adjectives reserved for similar incidents in the love-pulps. The lovers talk naturally, casually; they are evidently having a good time; but there is no attempt to exaggerate their rapture or to emphasize the swooning delights of osculation.

Also, in contrast with the love pulps, it will be noted that the romance slowly develops in a series of episodes, rather than in one overwhelming scene which sweeps the heroine off her feet.

#### PRACTICE SUGGESTIONS

1. Search through biographies, autobiographies, and biographical novels for passages involving true-life love incidents. Copy them down and contrast with typical love-pulp emotional passages.
2. Make similar comparisons involving passages from novels of the more realistic type.

*Popular Hobbies*, P. O. Box 710, Los Angeles 52, Calif., announces that it will begin publication around February 1, as a weekly tabloid newspaper for collectors. "We will pay  $\frac{3}{4}$  cent a word up for special material by professional writers," informs D. D. Livingston, publisher and editor. "We will also buy photographs. Non-professional contributors will frequently be rewarded with whatever we have to give them in their collecting field, or advertising, rubber stamps (if the P. O. permits), subscriptions, etc. Stories on hobbies of well-known people, unusual hobbies, or spot news with a hobby tie-in are desired. Copy must be short, should follow regular newspaper news or feature styles."

A subscriber reports that the New York Central System, 466 Lexington Ave., New York, which formerly published the *N. Y. Central Lines Magazine*, now publishes only a small company newspaper which, according to the editor, "overflows monthly with our own material."

*The Writers' Forum*, Yellow Springs, Ohio, has folded for the duration.

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*The Sign*, Union City, N. J., a Catholic monthly, pays 1 cent a word on acceptance for articles of general interest on current topics, to 3000 words. Rev. Ralph Gorman, C. P., is editor.

Mrs. G. N. Gillum, owner Gillum Book Co., 2113 Lexington Ave., Kansas City, Mo., apologizes for unprecedented long delay in answering correspondents. "We have been absolutely snowed under for the last six months," she writes, "and are just now coming up for air, and catching up on long delayed correspondence." She urges correspondents to be patient, assures that they have no need for concern. The Gillum Book Co. is actively in the market for good play material on home economics in its many phases.

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a pocket-size book, subtitled, *THE WRITER'S BIBLE*, by Natalie Newell, *The Story Doctor*, Coconut Grove, Miami 33, Florida. Postpaid, \$1.00.

# LITERARY MARKET TIPS

*Editorial Research, Inc.*, 721 Lincoln Bldg., 60 E. 42nd St., New York 17, Barrett Andrews, executive editor, is in the market for men and women success stories. The subjects do not have to be nationally known figures necessarily, but should have made a success in some industry or business. Mr. Andrews is also in the market for stories of businesses themselves which have started as little acorns and grown into mighty oaks. "We are also interested," he writes, "in obscure but true facts concerning important incidents of American history. None of our stuff should run over 350 words, and we are willing to pay up to 5 cents a word, count to be based on the exact number of words used in our releases."

*Catholic School Journal*, 540 N. Milwaukee St., Milwaukee 1, reports some need for projects or lessons in such subjects as geography and arithmetic. Payment is made on publication at ½ cent a word.

Carl Naether, 4442 Woodman, Van Nuys, Calif., is in the market for factual articles up to 1000 words, accompanied by snapshots, describing the activities of pigeon fanciers (fancy, racing, or squabbing), their lofts, birds, equipment, etc. Mr. Naether does not mention rates paid.

*Fortune*, Time and Life Bldg., New York, is now being published by William D. Geer.

*Office*, 270 Madison Ave., New York 16, pays ½ cent to 1½ cents a word on acceptance, extra for illustrations, for articles of 600 to 1800 words on office managers and stationers. Regular rate for cartoons on office subjects is \$5; for photos, \$3 to \$5. William Schulof is editor.

*The National Tattler*, 73 Adelaide St., W., Toronto, Ont., is no longer being published. Its editor, Al Palmer, is overseas.

*The United Roofer*, 168 E. 89th St., New York, pays 1 cent a word on publication for illustrated articles on roofing of all types (asphalt, slate, tile, coal tar pitch, wood, metal, asbestos), also on waterproofing and insulation. Some short fact items are used about personalities in the business, oddities, etc. James McCawley is editor.

*Canadian Heroes*, Suite 301, Medico-Dental Bldg., 1396 St. Catherine St., West, Montreal, Que., is in the market for manuscripts of a specialized nature. Although it follows the techniques of the comics, it is all Canadian and educational in content. A magazine for boys and girls between the ages of eight and 16, it uses true stories about the lives of governors general, prime ministers, Canadian scientists, and other men and women of historical and current importance. Detailed information on the preparation of manuscripts and on the rate of remuneration and on the actual requirements of the publishers, can be obtained from Educational Projects, Inc., at the above address.

*Trail-O-News*, 8820 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles 49, a quarterly claiming 95% coverage of U. S. trailer parks, covers the coach manufacturing, distributing, supplying, and dealer fields. Jean Jacques, managing editor, gives the following wants: Short articles pertaining to trailerites, trailer dealers, manufacturers, distributors, and trailer parks; limit, 1000 words. Good clear glossy pictures. No poetry nor verse. No fiction nor jokes. Good out-door and travel themes always welcome, provided trailering plays a part. Rates: ½ cent word up, pictures, 50 cents up."

*Musical Merchandise*, 1270 6th Ave., New York, pays ½ cent a word on publication for full-of-facts articles showing how musical instrument dealers are carrying on their business today despite the trying conditions imposed by shortage of merchandise. Pictures of window displays, interiors, with customers at counters (not empty stores), are very much wanted, but payment offered is only \$1. Address all manuscripts to Alex H. Kolbe.

*Western City*, 458 S. Spring St., Los Angeles, though largely staff-written, does buy an occasional article on some phase of western municipal government, according to Winston R. Updegraff, editor. Payment is 1 cent a word on acceptance.

*The Sonneteer*, Suite 306, C. B. S. Radio Bldg., 1697 Broadway, New York 19, edited by Nathaniel Thornton and Louise Valentine, is interested only in the various forms of the sonnet. It pays for all material used, though rates are not stated.

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Cambridge House, book publishers, 165 W. 25th St., New York 1, is seeking for book publication good stories on the bed customs and manners relating to the 48 states. Curious tales, anecdotes, humorous bits, will be considered, but writers should specify to which of the states their material relates. No stories should exceed 150 words, and the publisher reserves the right to edit. All material must be in the public domain. Bylines will be used and payment will be made on acceptance at 3 cents a word and up.

*View, Inc.*, 1 E. 53rd St., New York 22, announces the publication of four "first books" of poetry during 1944. The fourth of these will be chosen from a book manuscript submitted before April 31, 1944. The only condition is that the poet has published no previous volume of verse in English. All manuscripts should be accompanied by large, stamped, self-addressed mailing envelopes. Judges will be Charles Henri Ford and Parker Tyler, editors of *View*, and John Peale Bishop, poet-critic. To the poet whose manuscript is chosen, \$100 in advance royalties will be paid.

*Bookbinding and Book Production*, 50 Union Square, New York 3, announces that Frank Myrick has succeeded David Glixon as managing editor.

The Chicago *Daily News*, Daily News Plaza, Chicago 6, has adopted something entirely new in newspaper fiction—a Six-Day Serial. These serials replace the newspaper's Evening Story and Two-Week Serials. William J. Gorman, fiction editor, comments on this departure in newspaper fiction as follows: "The over-all length of the stories (7000 words) classes them with pre-war magazine-length short stories, but they are distinguished from all previous short story forms in that their six-part presentation calls for certain modifications of the usual short story development. . . . Each of the six parts should be a dramatic unit in itself, setting a scene, identifying the characters, and adding to the over-all plot—at least one phase of which is to be conciliated in that particular installment. Where in the ordinary 7000-word short story reader-interest may be retained with only three or four major plot twists, in the six-installment story there should be six twists; the first one (at the end of the first part) rousing the reader's curiosity as to what will come in the second part; the second rousing interest in the third, etc.; and the last one, in part six, bringing all the loose ends together in a dramatic climax and satisfying ending. . . . Each installment should consist of approximately 1200 words and, because synopses of previous installments are not being used, the leading paragraph in each chapter should briefly reset the story-scene and, at the same time that it starts new action, refresh the reader's memory of what has gone before." . . . Mystery, adventure, Western, straight romance, spy stories, all will be used, but rarely a war story, and no racial and religious or political problem stories. All stories must be clean, family-interesting. Rates are \$75 to \$150 on acceptance, with decisions within two weeks.

*Argosy*, 205 E. 42nd St., New York, has a former literary agent, Nanine Joseph, as its new article editor. "Articles for *Argosy*," says Miss Joseph, "must appeal to literate, intelligent people, and not to the intelligentsia."

Although *Digest and Review*, 683 Broadway, New York, O.K'd our listing in the December Quarterly Market List, F. L. Nelson, editor, writes a correspondent that the statement that  $\frac{1}{2}$  cent to 5 cents a word is paid for material is erroneous, that "present practice is to grant proper credit to the author of an article we reprint, and to the magazine which originally printed the article. We also send copies

of the *Digest*, containing the article, to the author and to the magazine."

*Skyscraper Management*, 134 S. La Salle St., Chicago, a monthly edited by W. J. McLaughlin, is not in the market at present.

*The Household Magazine*, Topeka, Kans., is shortening its name to *Household*, beginning with the February issue. During coming months, according to Nelson Antrim Crawford, editor-in-chief, it will devote increasing attention to post-war housing, remodeling, household equipment, and related subjects. Queries are invited from authors who can write authoritatively and entertainingly on topics in these fields. Contrary to a recent report, *Household* will not be in the market for serials in 1944.

*'Teens*, 1701-1703 Chestnut St., Philadelphia 3, Pa., Kenneth L. Wilson, editor, gives the following complete picture of editorial requirements. "*'Teens*," writes Mr. Wilson, "wants stories of 2000 words using both boy and girl characters. Payment for such stories is \$15 up. The 'clean wholesome' idea does not quite hit the mark. We want stories presenting problems, showing how young people face and meet those problems. They (the characters) should generally arrive at a correct solution, but they should by all means not always be rewarded for solving their problem correctly. *'Teens* wants to present to its readers life as it is—Here is the world now; it's

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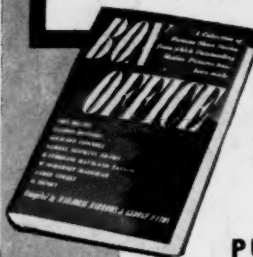
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